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AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

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CONGRESS.

In the Senate yesterday, the President was requested to communicate any correspondence which may have taken place between himself and the workingmen of England. President Lincoln's letter to the workingmen of Manchester was published in yesterday's HERALD. A joint resolution to facilitate a representation of our industrial interests at the exhibition at Hamburg, was reported. A resolution for a select committee to inquire into the conduct of Colonel Gilbert, who dispersed a meeting at Frankfort, Ky., recently, was laid over. Bills to carry into effect the treaty with Peru, and providing another judge for the courts of California and Oregon, were passed. A resolution was offered having in view a limitation of the number of paymasters, quartermasters and commissaries of volunteers. The resolution of inquiry concerning the arrest of D. A. Mahony and others was indefinitely postponed—21 against 19. The bill to reorganize the engineer corps was discussed and recommitted to the Military Committee. The bill organizing the militia was received from the House and the amendments ordered to be printed. A motion to take up the Bankrupt bill was agreed to by a vote of 26 against 16, and the Senate then went into executive session and confirmed several unimportant nominations.

In the House of Representatives a bill to punish frauds on the government was passed. The Senate bill for the appointment of additional generals was passed. It provides for forty major generals and one hundred brigadier generals; also, that no appointment shall be made except for gallant and meritorious service in the field. Mr. Stevens made a report on the disagreeing votes of the two houses on the bill to provide means for the support of the government. All the points were covered, excepting the clause taxing bank notes. The report was agreed to by a vote of 71 yeas to 69 nays. The House insisted upon its bank clause disagreement, and the subject will be referred to a new conference committee. In Committee of the Whole the amendments to the Internal Revenue bill were considered. An amendment reducing the duty on paper was offered by Mr. Lovejoy, but was opposed as irrelevant, and subsequently withdrawn. It was stated, however, that a bill reducing the duty on paper will be introduced at a future time.

THE LEGISLATURE.

In the State Senate yesterday several bills were introduced, among which was one to amend the law in relation to burglary, bringing under the head of that crime the breaking open of railroad cars, canal boats, or any place where goods are stored. A concurrent resolution was introduced urging on the general government the payment to families of deceased soldiers arrears of money due for service in the army, and also the payment to counties in the State of sums due them. The resolution providing that sufficient funds to pay up to the present time all the troops from this State shall be advanced from the State treasury, in the form of a loan to the national government, was referred to the Judiciary Committee, with instructions to report a bill to that effect. A statement of the condition of the savings banks of the State was received from the Superintendent of the Banking Department. A number of local bills were under consideration.

In the Assembly the bill to enable the Croton Board to hold certain land on the upper part of the island, to facilitate the supplying of water to that part of the city, was ordered to a third reading, as also that for the appointment of a State Commissioner of Lunacy. Several matters not of general interest were acted upon. A considerable portion of the day's session was taken up in a discussion on the Governor's message.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

The Board of Aldermen held two sessions yesterday, and transacted a great deal of business. The report of the Committee on Warrent, Piers and Slips, presented by their Chairman, Alderman Boole, is a most important document, and if properly acted upon will prove a source of immense future revenue to the city, as well as recovering millions of unpaid rents for the use of municipal property. Boole, of Japanese notoriety, is determined to immortalize himself in local legislation, and if he succeeds in turning into the city coffers funds which have been for years defrauded of he will get the thanks of the overburdened taxpayers. A ballot was taken for the Harbor Defence Commissioners, which resulted in the appointment of Aldermen Henry, Mitchell, Hardy, Boole and Ottiwell. Fire Marshal Baker sent in his semi-annual report, which shows that he is performing his duty well, and by his promptness quelling incendiaries in a gratifying degree. Amendments were made to the ordinance to continue an additional aid of \$500,000 for the families of volunteers, and it was again sent, as amended, to the Councilmen. The Board adjourned to Monday next, at one o'clock.

A regular meeting of the Board of Councilmen was held last evening. A committee of conference was appointed, to confer with a similar committee from the Board of Aldermen, in reference to the action to be taken on the ordinance for the relief of the families of volunteers. The committee reported in favor of receding from the amendments adopted at the last meeting of the Board, and the ordinance was returned to the Aldermen in its original form, to be amended by them if necessary. The Harlem Railroad Company presented a petition against the removal, by the Street Commissioner, of the turnouts they had laid down without municipal authority. Referred to the Committee on Railroads. The Board balloted for Harbor Defence Commissioners, when the following members were elected:—Jones, Brice, Hayes, Haughton and Repper. The Comptroller sent in his usual fortnightly statement of the relief afforded to families of volunteers, from which it appears that during the fortnight ending on the 21st instant, 37,000 persons were relieved, at an expense of \$65,351. A resolution was adopted, directing the Comptroller to inform the Board what amount of money was paid to each of the Corporation paupers during the year 1862, for city and county advertising. A resolution of concurrence was adopted, directing the appointment, in the Bureau of the Public Administrator, of a special agent, at an annual salary of \$2,000, to take charge of and settle the estates of deceased soldiers from this city. The Family Aid Ordinance, as amended by the Board of Aldermen, was concurred in, and the Board adjourned until Monday evening next at four o'clock.

The regular fortnightly meeting of the Commissioners of Charities and Correction took place yesterday. A communication was received from Comptroller Brennan, calling the attention of the Board to the "act of 1817, of the Legislature," appropriating \$10,000 annually for the relief of destitute foreigners and strangers, and asking why this money has not been paid since 1849. The Board replied, thanking the Comptroller, and stating that the Legislature had not conformed to the act since 1849, and that no good reason appeared to them why the appropriation should not be regularly made. There was no further business of public interest. The number in the public institutions is 6,767—an increase of eighteen for the week. The number admitted was 1,429, and the number discharged, transferred, and who died, was 1,411.

An injunction has been issued to restrain the Board of Aldermen from voting upon the subject of revoking the privileges granted to Commodore Vanderbilt of pier No. 1 North river, in 1853. In the Superior Court a man named Dickie recovered a verdict of \$175,000 damages against Mr. Anderson, of Liverpool street, for injury sustained by a fall through a grate, used as a covering for a coal vault, and which was imperfectly fastened. Judge Barnard has ordered a stay of proceedings for five days in the case of Mr. Taylor's mandamus against Comptroller Brennan respecting the payment of the Fort Garret property purchase money.

The case of Jacob Weiler, indicted in the Court of General Sessions for the murder of his wife in August last, was concluded yesterday. The jury, after being out nearly four hours, brought in a verdict of guilty of murder in the second degree, the penalty for which is imprisonment for life or not less than ten years, according to the discretion of the Court. The prisoner was remanded for sentence.

A letter received in this city from Tarragona, Spain, states that an American seaman, named David Mason, was murdered on the mole, in that place, on or about the 15th ult. The deceased is said to have a wife and children residing in this city.

A letter from Bangkok, Siam, of the 28th of November, announces the death of a child of Captain and Mrs. Emery, of the American bark Algonquin, at that place, on the 27th of the same month.

The stock and gold markets were very variable and irregular yesterday. At the morning board stocks were all lower, but in the afternoon they rallied to the prices of last evening. Gold sold at low as 159 1/2 and as high as 172, closing 171 1/2 bid. Exchange sold at 185. Money was abundant at 6 1/2 per cent on call.

The demand was less active for breadstuffs yesterday. Prices were 5c. a 100c. lower for flour, 1c. a 2c. for corn, and heavy for wheat. Pork declined 12 1/2c. a 25c. per barrel, with lighter sales. Lard, tallow and cod oils were active at advancing rates. Beef was quiet. There was less animation in groceries, whiskey and tobacco, while hides, linseed oil, tallow and wool were freely sought after. Cotton was very dull at 90c. a 91c. for middling. The auction sale of sole leather resulted quite unsatisfactorily. The freight market was decidedly briske and closed with more firmness.

Congress and the Rebellion—President Lincoln as a Temporary Dictator.

The important measures which have lately passed, and others which are now under consideration in the two houses of Congress, will leave no excuse for a failure on the part of the present administration to put an end to the rebellion. With the closing of the present session President Lincoln will be practically invested with all the powers of a dictator. The scope of his authority and discretion as President of the United States will hardly be less than that of Louis Napoleon as Emperor of France. Our whole political system of the peace establishment, including the subordination of the federal government to the will of the States and the people, will be reversed; for the States and the people will be rendered subordinate to the will of the federal administration. And this will be done, too, through the duly elected representatives of the States and the people in Congress assembled.

This most remarkable political revolution is now within a few days of its consummation. The Militia bill, which has passed, places under the control of the President, for the purposes of this war, all the militia of the United States; the Banking bill, which has passed, and the Treasury note or financial bill, which is under consideration, will invest him with an almost unlimited power over the banks, finances and currency of the country; and that other bill which is pending before the House, providing for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, will give him full authority over the liberties of the individual citizen. In a word, we may say that with the adjournment of this Congress, on the 4th of March, President Lincoln, for the two years remaining of his term of office, will be clothed with dictatorial powers, political, military and financial, over State and citizen, and by the action of Congress, and under the authority of the constitution.

This organic instrument, and the laws passed in pursuance thereof, constitute the supreme law of the land. Nor do we think it can be successfully denied or contested that, in straining its warlike authority to the establishment at Washington of a temporary dictatorship, Congress, in the acts indicated, has passed the barriers of the constitution. The legislative power of Congress in regard to the militia, in cases of invasion or rebellion, and over the financial affairs of the country, and the habeas corpus, is broad and comprehensive. It is possible that with a Napoleon or a Cromwell, clothed with this provisional dictatorship, there would be an end of our republican institutions, and the beginning of an imperial establishment; but there is not the slightest danger of an abuse of his authority by President Lincoln for ambitious purposes. We all know that his ambition is limited to the suppression of this rebellion; but, if it were not, we all know that he would be utterly powerless to employ the intelligent, liberty-loving soldiers of the Union in any movement involving the suppression of our regular Presidential election.

We therefore entertain no apprehensions of evil results to the reserved rights of the States or the liberties of the people from these extraordinary powers with which Congress is clothing the President. On the other hand, as these laws will be passed over to the next administration, they may even then be turned to good account in the application of their pains and penalties to the abolitionists of the North after the rebels of the South shall have been reduced to their proper allegiance. Meantime, accepting the plea of imperative necessity, we cheerfully consent to this transformation of our President into a temporary dictator. We cheerfully consent, in view of the great object of concentrating the forces and resources of the loyal States against those of the rebellion, and in the belief that this is the shortest way to the restoration of the Union. We cheerfully consent to surrender for the present some of the privileges, immunities, exemptions and blessings of peace, to push on this war, upon which depends the very life of the nation.

Upon this point the patriotism of the loyal States is surely equal to that self-sacrificing fanaticism which governs the people of the rebellious States. Those people are under the most terrible despotism ever known in modern times. They bear it, they sustain it, and they submit to conscriptions, cruelties, extortions, privations, spoliations, losses and sufferings painful to contemplate, under the belief that all these things are demanded of them to secure the independence of their Southern confederacy, and under the belief, too, that, with this object secured, they will have a better government, and a new career of happiness, security and prosperity. Are not, then, the people of the loyal States equal to the task of sustaining, in a comparatively light degree, the burdens of a struggle upon which not only the life of the government, but the safety of the property, the home and the 'sehold gods of every man in the country depends? The intelligent reader will need no prompting to answer this question.

But we consent in these measures of Con-

gress from still another view of the subject. They will admonish the great Powers of Europe that foreign intervention against the Union is not to be thought of, and that they can only intervene in support of the cause of the Union. Thus Louis Napoleon may, perhaps, be convinced that the time has arrived when, acting upon Mr. Seward's Congressional peace proposition, he may say to Jeff. Davis and his confederates: Further resistance against the federal government is worse than useless. Accept the friendly offices of France in behalf of your submission to the Union, or prepare for the consequences. But in every view of the subject, foreign and domestic, we are prepared to sustain these war measures of Congress, and to support the President even as a temporary dictator. Let us support him, and all that we have lost may be restored; but if we abandon him all that we have may be lost.

The End of the Rebellion and the War—Mr. Seward's Proposition and French Mediation.

The proposition of Mr. Seward to the Emperor of the French, to put an end to our domestic war and prevent future hostilities, by admitting to their vacant seats in Congress the representatives of the Legislatures and of the people of the several States now in rebellion, has given rise to much discussion about the propriety of the course of the Secretary of State, and a great deal of speculation as to the probable action of the French government. The proposition of Mr. Seward has been denounced by some and ridiculed by other journals; but its wisdom and humanity will be demonstrated by the happy results. It is contended that if Louis Napoleon should intervene it would not be in favor of the Union, but in the interest of the rebellious States, for which he has hitherto exhibited so much sympathy. Now, we deny the premises, which this argument rests. There is no evidence that the Emperor of the French has ever shown any favor to the rebels or sympathy with their cause. The English government, indeed, have stated through their organs that he made a proposition to them to recognize the independence of the Southern confederacy—a proposition by declining which they lay claim to much magnanimity. But we have not yet seen any proof of the allegation, and it was probably set afloat by John Bull for the purpose of embroiling France with the United States. One fact is worth a thousand conjectures or unsupported assertions. The Emperor has never permitted any privateers to be fitted up in French ports against the merchant marine of the United States. The British government has permitted the Alabama and other armed rebel vessels to be built under their very nose to war upon our commerce. It is through the connivance of the British government that the blockade is so frequently run from the port of Nassau by vessels carrying goods contraband of war. Yet we are told England is strictly neutral and France the friend of the South.

The very reverse of this is true. France was the friend of the United States in their struggle with the tyrant George III. It was through her aid in arms, men, money and ships that the war resulted at last in the triumph of the American cause. This was in the reign of a king—the unfortunate Louis XVI. But the same friendship for this country was illustrated when France was a republic, and the victor of Marengo her first Consul. In 1803 Napoleon sold Louisiana to Jefferson, in behalf of the United States, for a mere trifle. He did so, not only from hereditary friendship to the Union, but from hereditary enmity to its baffled foe. He desired to see the American republic a counterpoise to the maritime supremacy of England; and Napoleon III. would not be the nephew of his uncle, or be true to the traditions of France, if he did not desire the same thing. From the beginning of this war British statesmen and their organs have never ceased to exult in the division of the republic, because they feared and hated it as the naval and commercial rival of England. They have openly declared that they consider the severance of the Union as an accomplished, final and fixed fact, and that this result is for the benefit of mankind in general and the British empire in particular. The chief reason they allege for refusing to join Napoleon in friendly mediation is that the effort might result in reconciliation, whereas, by letting the belligerents fight it out, they would not only be rendered harmless to John Bull for a long time to come, but their eternal separation would be secured. To accomplish this their amiable cousins are willing to sacrifice cotton for years to come, and even to risk a revolution at home. No such sentiment animates the breast of Napoleon. He desires the restoration of the Union and a speedy peace.

It is highly probable, therefore, that he will not only accept the proposition of Mr. Seward, but ask the other crowned heads of Europe to unite with him in supporting it. If any or all of them refuse, he will nevertheless go forward himself, and place them in a false position. He will say to Mr. Seward: "I agree to your plan, and I will lay it before the Southern confederacy." Of course the Secretary of State and the President, by whose authority the proposition was made, must agree—they are bound by their own offer, which they made in good faith. If the Confederate government also agree, then an armistice will of course follow, and the representatives from the Southern States taking their places in Congress, there will be an amnesty and oblivion of the past, and, after calm deliberation, guarantees for the future can be adopted and inserted in the constitution. The bill prohibiting the return of the Southern representatives to their seats can have no legal efficacy. It is not competent to members of Congress from one section of the country to disfranchise another section, and keep the seats of its representatives vacant, or fill them with bogus members not elected according to law. Congress cannot change the constitution. Nor will the Executive give any aid in carrying out so revolutionary a measure. The emancipation proclamation, moreover, will fall to the ground, as so much waste paper, and the confiscation acts will share the same fate. The judiciary—one of the three co-ordinate branches of the government, and that to which is specially assigned the duty of expounding the constitution—will pronounce all such laws null and void. The Emperor of France, on his part, will insist on the fulfillment of the treaty by which Louisiana was sold to our government. One of the conditions was, that the municipal rights of the French citizens then inhabiting that territory should be strictly preserved. Among those rights was that of holding negro slaves; and it belongs to those people and their descendants to forego that right if they think proper; but it is not lawfully in the power of the general govern-

ment to deprive them of it by force. On the other hand, if the rebel authorities should decline to accept the offer made to them through the Emperor of the French, they would be put completely in the wrong, and the Southern people, who are thoroughly sick of the war, would be very likely to rise against them and bring back their States by a counter revolution, by so nothing of the probability of Napoleon compelling the Richmond Cabinet to succumb, by sending his legions now in Mexico across the Texas frontier, by aiding the Union arms to crush the rebellion by land and by sea, and by enlisting in the interests of peace and the cause of humanity the whole civilized world.

We shall therefore look forward with great interest to the reply of Napoleon, and hope that not only will it be favorable, but that his diplomatic negotiations may be completed in time to permit the President to call for the Fourth of July an extra session of Congress, to represent every State, South and North, East and West, and thus to solve the problem of a permanent peace, and what George Washington declared to be the first essential to the very existence of the States as an independent Power, "their indissoluble Union under one federal head."

The Spectre of McClellan Haunting the Niggerheads.

After Brutus and Cassius, and the other conspirators had put Julius Caesar out of their way his spectre troubled them. They easily disposed of Caesar's body; but his spirit would not down at their bidding. An unwelcome visitor at every feast, a grim admonition at every council, an awful warning in the camp near Sardis, came Caesar's memory and Caesar's ghost, with the prediction, "Thou shalt see me at Philippi." So the spectre of General McClellan haunts the niggerheads. They shriek with rage and fear in the halls of Congress at the bare mention of his name. They lose no opportunity of vilifying and slandering him in their treasonable papers. Just as Brutus, in the dead of night, saw Caesar stalk terribly before him, so Mephistopheles Stevens was appalled by the spectre of McClellan during the debate upon the Conscription bill on Tuesday last. Hence the production of the letter from General Scott, on file in the War Department, in which the veteran complains of certain "irregularities" in the conduct of General McClellan in neglecting to report directly to him instead of to the President or the Secretary of War. This letter has greatly rejoiced the niggerheads; but we doubt that it will at all injure the gallant General whom they have so consistently assailed.

Mephistopheles Stevens has shown himself no friend of General Scott in exhuming this letter. It was the trick of a base political partisan, blinded by malice and careless of consequences. The letter, it will be observed, was read by Mr. Stevens without the least explanation of the peculiar circumstances under which the "irregularities" complained of occurred. If those circumstances were fully known General McClellan's conduct would vindicate itself. Secretary Stanton, who is aware of the reasons why McClellan did not always report to General Scott, has added another to his many manoeuvres by allowing that letter to be produced without the appropriate commentary. In his desire to injure McClellan he has again exposed his own contemptible, petty spite to public reprobation. Suppose that General McClellan had, at that time, positive orders from the President and the Secretary of War to report to them, and not to General Scott, how would the case stand then? Secretary Stanton knows whether or not such orders were issued; and, if they were, he has been guilty of the most despicable connivance with falsehood in allowing Stevens to produce General Scott's letter without explaining the circumstances under which McClellan acted. We know that at that period General Scott was extremely obnoxious to the Secretary of War; that the President and the Secretary both considered the veteran too old and ill for further service; that they wished to remove him, but "let I dare not wait upon I would;" that soon afterwards his resignation was accepted and McClellan appointed in his place; that for some months prior to this acceptance of Scott's resignation McClellan was virtually regarded and treated as the Commander-in-Chief by the President, the Secretary of War and all their friends and favorites. These facts were openly talked about in Washington, and are embalmed not only in the correspondence of our newspapers, but in the diaries of Count Gurovski and Bull Run Russell, both of whom were then admitted to the confidences of our highest officials. What is more natural, therefore, than that the President and his War Secretary should have privately directed McClellan to deal with them, and not with General Scott?

On the 4th of October, 1861, when General Scott wrote that letter, he thus describes his condition:—"I am unable to ride in the saddle or walk, by reason of dropsy in my feet and legs, and paralysis in the small of the back." More than this, he had not yet recovered from the chagrin and mortification caused by the defeat of our army at Bull Run—the first battle about which General Scott ever consulted the politicians, and the first he ever lost. The veteran General instinctively felt that he was being unjustly assailed by the very abolition clique which had previously urged him "onward to Richmond," and although he did not, perhaps, fully understand the intrigues against him, he knew that his removal was strenuously demanded. We can readily appreciate the spirit in which the old hero regarded the apparent "neglect" of subordinate generals during this period. Even unintentional slights pain the recipient deeply when circumstances indicate that his power is waning. This letter, then, was like a spoonful of that "hasty plate of soup" which scalded the General just before his Mexican campaign. It was written not as a grave charge of insubordination against General McClellan, but because the veteran's amour propre was wounded by the indifference of McClellan's superiors, and because he thought he saw in McClellan's "neglect" a hint of a desire to get rid of the war-worn soldier. We can readily excuse General Scott for writing such a letter under such circumstances; but there is no excuse for the meanness of Stanton and Stevens in making the letter public. It is of a piece, however, with the usual treatment of McClellan by the niggerheads. They could not win him to their disgraceful schemes, and so they determined to ruin him. We do not believe that they greatly congratulate themselves upon their success. In vain did they withhold reinforcements and supplies at the hour of his greatest need. General McClellan did not die before Richmond. In vain did they heap insult